

Chapter

5

Reports and Results of a ROPA Visit

I. Report of the Review Team

The ROPA Consultant, with the assistance of the Chair of the Review Team, prepares the final report. The report summarizes the findings of the Review Team relative to the evidence provided that the program(s) and institution are meeting Vermont's Program Approval Standards.

The format for the report is as follows:

- 1) Description of the process including names and affiliations of the Review Team and details of the team's activities
- 2) Summary of findings for each of the program approval standards for the institution as a whole (e.g., *meets standard, approaching standard, emergent* or *no evidence*)
- 3) Recommendation to VSBPE to grant *full approval, conditional approval, or deny approval* for each program reviewed
- 4) Review Team's stipulations for institution and/or programs
- 5) Introduction and overview of the preparation program(s) at the institution
- 6) Summary of findings of the Review Team for each of the seven program approval standards by indicator and for individual programs
- 7) *Commendations, Concerns, and Considerations for Further Program Development* by the seven program approval standards and for each program reviewed

II. Report Process

Draft Report

Upon completion of the draft report by the ROPA Consultant, a copy is sent to Review Team members for verification of findings. With the team's approval, the draft is sent to the department chair for factual corrections. The institution will notify the VTDOE in a timely manner if any corrections to the report are needed. Please also offer supporting documentation. (See Appendix E for a sample of factual corrections.)

Final Report

A finalized report is sent to the president of the institution and a copy is filed with the VTDOE.

Rejoinder & Revised Five-Year Plan

Upon receipt of the final report, the institution must revise its Five-Year Plan incorporating the findings of the Review Team. The institution's rejoinder should also respond to the concerns of the Review Team. (See Appendix E for sample documents.) Institutions may choose to challenge a finding of the Review Team or raise concerns about the visit in the rejoinder.

III. VSBPE Actions

Upon receiving the team's report and the institution's rejoinder, the Chair of the VSBPE will schedule a meeting at which a representative of the Review Team presents the team's findings and recommendations. Representatives from the institution are notified of the meeting and invited to participate.

The VSBPE Higher Education Committee will review the revised plan, the report and rejoinder before making a final decision on program approval. The VSBPE may take one of the following actions for the institution as a whole or for each program reviewed at the institution:

- grant full approval for six years
- grant conditional approval for a specified time period
- deny approval

The VSBPE may also choose to make specific recommendations or add stipulations following discussions. A simple majority of the VSBPE is required to enact any recommendation.

IV. Two-Year Report

Once the report of the Review Team has been accepted by the VSBPE, the institution must submit a report to the VSBPE within two years of the acceptance date. The report should begin by offering a brief overview of all programs seeking continued full-approval, including the number of candidates enrolled in each program, and continue to describe any major changes at the institution that may impact the educator preparation program(s). (See Appendix C for a sample of this required chart.)

The Two-Year Report should proceed to offer a description of its overall progress on each of the program approval standards not found to *meet standard* at the time of the full-program review. Explain what steps the institution has taken as a whole to meet the standard.

The report should go on to describe in detail how the institution and/or program have addressed the specific concerns and stipulations of the Review Team. (See Appendix E for a sample report.)

The VSBPE reviews the report and determines whether satisfactory progress has been made towards addressing the concerns. If the VSBPE finds satisfactory progress, full approval for the program will be continued and extended for the next four years. Programs on conditional approval may be granted full approval at this time. If the progress is unsatisfactory, the VSBPE may decide to grant conditional approval for a given period of time or deny approval for the program.

V. Interim Report

The Review Team or the VSBPE may request an interim report from an institution if the concerns of the Review Team are such that they feel closer monitoring and/or support of the educator preparation program is warranted.

If a program is granted *conditional approval*, the Review Team will recommend to the VSBPE the length of the approval and what conditions need to be met in order for the program to be granted full approval. The conditions may be a written report, a set of modifications verified through an on-site visit, or any other appropriate course of action. If the VSBPE finds that a program has satisfactorily met the conditions and submitted supporting evidence, the VSBPE may grant full approval until the next scheduled approval review. If the conditions are not met, the VSBPE may continue approval for a specified time period with conditions attached or deny approval.

VI. Follow-Up or Focused Visits

Vermont's *Regulations Governing the Licensing of Educators and the Preparation of Educational Professionals* provides the VSBPE with the authority to conduct a follow up review of any approved program during its approval period if there is a concern that the program is out of compliance with any program approval requirement (section 5942.1). The follow-up review may be a written report, a focused visit, or both. The VSBPE has the responsibility for determining the exact nature of the review. As with all of its actions, the VSBPE will provide information, adequate notice and consultation to the institution.

VII. Appeals Process

If a program is *denied approval*, the institution shall be notified and offered an opportunity for a hearing. The institution may appeal the decision of the VSBPE to the State Board of Education (section 5950). After conducting a hearing, the State Board may affirm, modify or reverse the decision of the VSBPE.

VIII. Assistance

The VTDOE is available to provide assistance to institutions following a visit. The Higher Education Liaison can meet with interested programs to review the findings of the Review Team and develop strategies to meet program approval standards and to address the concerns of the Review Team.

IX. Substantive Changes

Once a program is approved, it is the expectation of the VSBPE that no significant changes will alter the course of preparation of its students. The VSBPE will need to be notified in writing of any substantive changes to the practices or policies of the educator preparation program and/or the institution. Such changes may include dropping an area of licensure, substantially changing a program's design, significantly altering field experiences, etc. (See Appendix E for a sample format.)

X. Low Performing Institutions

The Vermont State Board of Education adopted revised criteria on June 23, 2006 in order to identify and assist low-performing programs of teacher preparation in compliance with HEA Title II, Section 208(a). (Please see Appendix G for further information.)